



ARTICLE

Twa chiels rowed in a naturish bosie

Cathy Francis, catherine.francis1@abdn.ac.uk

University of Aberdeen, Scotland

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1050-3475>

Jackie Ross, jackietales@msn.com

Doric Storyteller and Author, Scotland

DOI Number: <https://doi.org/10.26203/7kw5-h226>

Copyright: © 2023 Francis *et al.*

To cite this article: Francis, C. and Ross, J., (2023). Twa chiels rowed in a naturish bosie. *Education in the North*, **30**(2) pp.66-80.



This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-Non-commercial License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>), which permits non-commercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.

Twa chiels rowed in a naturish bosie

Cathy Francis, catherine.francis1@abdn.ac.uk

University of Aberdeen, Scotland

Jackie Ross, jackietales@msn.com

Doric Storyteller and Author, Scotland

Abstract

This article describes combining embodied meaning-making with the written and spoken words of two languages to surface novel, nuanced understandings of children's connections with nature. Grasped literally and figuratively, children's unique learning with nature at a beach was 'handed' to the adult authors of this article to be transformed from a one-hundred-thousand-word thesis, written in English, into a spoken three-minute thesis in Doric. Although each author had a personal connection with the Doric language, one of the Indigenous languages of Scotland, their lived experiences of the language were very different. Their challenge was to come together to co-create joint meaning to share with others.

As if to mirror the authors' embodied experiences with each other of meaning-making with language, the reader is invited, through a carefully constructed bodymind provocation, to experience their own dynamic and shifting engagement with learning. Arising from the tension created by a juxtaposition of situated sociocultural experiences of nature, Doric, and English, it is rendered very likely that each reader will find unique, situated, and deeply personal meaning as they read.

Using Goethian principles of scientific observation (Holdrege, 2005; Seamon, 2013) as a lens to understand better the authors' joint work with English and Doric to interpret children's embodied encounters with nature at the beach, translation experiences are unpicked. A close critique of the authors' experiences focuses on birthing the three-minute thesis title 'Rowed in a Naturish Bosie' from its English counterpart, 'Becoming Naturish' (Francis, 2023). Thus, this article connects a written account of a thesis, which surfaced learning often overlooked in Scottish education, with a three-minute version capable of voicing learning frequently unheard.

Keywords: Doric, Indigenous language, bodymind, embodied learning, nature

Introduction

This article explores a novel collaboration between Cathy, a novice researcher, and Jackie, an author. Both are former primary schoolteachers with a love of nature and a passion for making learning relevant and fun for the young people they worked with. One now found herself preparing an account of her PhD thesis as a three-minute presentation in Doric for an upcoming postgraduate conference in Aberdeen, Scotland. The other had become an experienced author and editor, regularly writing and publishing various texts in Doric. Doric is a dialect of Scots, one of the Indigenous languages of Scotland (Millar, 2022) and it is described later. Although each demonstrated a connection with and commitment to Doric in their separate endeavours, their *grasp* and use of the language was far from similar. This article describes the combined past and present lived experiences of the *twa chieles*¹ that breathed new life into a thesis exploring children's embodied connection with nature as it was transformed from English to Doric.

¹*Twa* means two in English, and *chiel* is a Doric term for a fellow, usually a male. However, the *twa chieles* of this article are Cathy and Jackie working together as friends.

The term *grasp* used in the previous paragraph has particular significance because of its association with the hands and the sense of touch. First, the PhD to be presented explored children's connection with nature through their embodied meaning-making with nature using their bodies and minds. The children's experiences in nature at the beach specifically involved them collecting and interacting with natural artefacts; shells were picked up and turned over in the palm of their hands, seaweed was prodded, and gritty, wet sand was sculpted into shapes and patterns with cold fingers. Second, as this article's aspiring and experienced Doric writers began their joint effort to capture, condense, and communicate the thesis, their adult hands instinctively waved about in enthusiastic gestures. Therefore, meaning was grasped literally and figuratively throughout the thesis and its transformation.

The other concern of this article is to highlight the correspondence of the process of condensing and communicating a co-constructed account of the thesis into Doric with Goethian principles of scientific observation. Briefly, the principles focus on close observation of a phenomenon from three perspectives (Holdrege, 2005; Seamon, 2013). Making close observations whilst maintaining a holistic perception of processes and products was a powerful theme of Cathy's English one-hundred-word thesis. At the time, however, her focus was on a sensorial examination (Pink, 2015) of recursive and responsive connections and becomings of bodies, in relation with each other, in contact zones (Haraway, 2016). In her thesis, Cathy specifically wrote about children's bodies (particularly their hands) and minds in relation with seaweed and crabs found at the beach.

Later in this article, the reader is invited to engage with the two versions of the three-minute thesis. The dual texts are presented side-by-side as two columns. As the eyes flicker backwards and forward across the page, the reader is forced to break the hegemony of linear interpolation of the reading process in pursuit of learning. Thus, the reader is encouraged to engage their own body and mind to understand more readily the dynamic and shifting nature of learning (for examples see, Kuby, Spector and Johnson Thiel, 2019). The bodymind (Merleau-Ponty, 1962) refers to a mutually responsive combination of the

mind and body, in continuous exchange, acting to bring forth meaning. This concept was used by Cathy to interpret and understand the events in contact zones formed at the beach.

Following the presentation of the dual texts, the creation of a Doric title is explored. It is suggested that the detail of its emergence demonstrates the 'value' added by attempting to transfer meaning from one language to another. From here onwards the article is written in the first person where Cathy is the person. The process moved me irrevocably towards a deeper and more nuanced understanding of children's embodied connections with nature. Whereas the aim of the thesis was to find and communicate learning often overlooked, this article builds an understanding of learning frequently unheard.

The origin of the thesis

What follows is a brief outline of the origin and provocation of a PhD thesis focused upon closely examining children's learning through their bodyminds with nature at the beach. The philosophical perspective of the thesis is shared, and the main findings are indicated.

The thesis was born of my frustration with the hegemony of the neoliberal expectations of primary education, particularly the subjugation of the subjective (Burnard and Colucci-Gray, 2020). It intended to disrupt the hegemony of Western primary education in seeking and celebrating learning often missed by professional teachers within contemporary educational contexts (Francis, 2023). It challenged the sources and sites of learning and drew attention to the role of the child's bodymind when learning outdoors in nature. The thesis contended that a recognition of the role of the bodymind in children's learning would go some way to ameliorate Rathunde's (2008) concern that a dis-embodiment of education was leading to a paucity of understanding of self in relation to other.

The main focus of the thesis was, therefore, the relationality between human teachers, learners and more-than-human-other, i.e. nature. Importantly, the thesis embraced the notion that nature could be considered at least an equal leader of learning alongside the human components (Rinaldi, 2005). In terms of Learning for Sustainability in Scotland (Education Scotland, 2014, 2021; Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2010), Place-based learning (Gruenewald, 2003), and Sustainability Education (Somerville and Williams, 2015) more widely, full appreciation and acceptance of the roles and balancing of the needs of more-than-human-others with humans is thought fundamental for the future flourishing of life on the planet. Given these theoretical insights and policy context, the intention of the thesis was to encourage a less anthropocentric perspective on learning to schoolteachers who might seek to encourage children's learning more holistically, where learning involves the children outside in direct relation with nature.

Fieldwork as beachwork

The fieldwork comprised a weekly visit to the beach by a class of eight-year-old schoolchildren during mainstream education. Whilst curriculum and safety guidelines were fully respected, the emphasis was on allowing opportunity for children's serendipitous, embodied encounters with more-than-human-other to come to the fore. The research methods, methodology, and analysis document an alternative

approach to teaching and learning, which surfaced valuable, authentic, and impactful understanding of one's place in relation to nature through the bodymind. As a whole work, the thesis witnessed the growth of children's deep emotional connection with seaweed and crabs in particular and a consequent appreciation of their place within and alongside nature (Francis, 2023).

The first indication that children recognised their shifting relationality with nature was when I asked them what they thought they were doing each week when they visited the beach. One individual replied *becoming naturish!* The whole class and I discussed the phrase some more and understood that *becoming naturish* means "Liking the outdoors and knowing what it means. When you know a lot about nature, and you're really used to it" (Francis, 2023, p.xvii). Following the inception of this first novel term, which became well-used by the whole class, other words came. The children coined words for other activities at the beach: *plearning* and *flearning*. These words meant, respectively, playing and learning and having fun and learning (ibid.). Upon reflection, these events perhaps hinted that generally accepted English words were proving insufficient to express our complete and nuanced embodied experiences with nature.

The origin of the three-minute thesis version

When writing up the thesis, I was involved in organising a Postgraduate Research (PGR) conference at the University of Aberdeen. At one planning meeting, it was decided that the conference would include an increasingly popular three-minute thesis event. Aberdeen has many international students, and in a moment of inspirational innovation, it was agreed that each presenter would be allowed to present their thesis in English but then offered the opportunity to present in another language of the research student's choice. My peers chose their 'mother tongues' of Indonesian, German, and Trinidadian Creole. In the absence of speaking another language, I suggested presenting my thesis in Doric to represent the linguistic heritage of Northeast Scotland. We were PhD students supporting and encouraging each other in our early research endeavours, and I was keen to be part of a team effort to celebrate inclusivity and diversity in our PGR group. This 'team effort', or feeling of fellowship, connects with Jackie's and my description of us as *twa chieles*, or two fellows, described in the introduction. It is important to know that although I had some experience composing poetry with children in Doric as a classroom teacher, I had never attempted any form of prose and had nothing approaching formal academic writing. From living and teaching in Northeast Scotland for some time, I knew Doric resonated with many families and community members, but it is not my 'mother tongue'!

Before describing the details of the collaboration between the *twa chieles* to produce the three-minute thesis, it is helpful for the reader to know a little of the history of Doric. A consideration of its temporal and spatial 'place' in relation to the English language is made, followed by a brief examination of the connections people of the region have had and continue to have with it.

A short history of Doric

Historically, Doric has been used as a term to describe a range of British rural dialects (Leslie, 2021). Today, however, it is specifically used to describe a dialect of Scots spoken in Northeast Scotland. The term originates from ancient Greece, where it was typically associated with rural and pastoral elements

of life in Southeastern Greece. This contrasted with the assumed superior characteristics of 'Attic' city-dwelling Athenians (ibid.). Arguably, such sociocultural prejudice persists in parts of the UK today. A growing body of literature evidences the many tensions a localised language and its speakers endure over the years in Britain and further afield (Leonard, 2019; Ljosland, 2021).

During the reign of James VI, Doric was used in government, law and literature by royalty, scholars and courtiers (National Library of Scotland, undated). Doric is still spoken in Northeast Scotland's many fishing and farming communities in contemporary daily life. I live near Keith, in Moray. It is credited with being the first Scot's Toon (Scot's Language Centre, 2014). Its title is declared on road signs as you enter the *toon*, and Keith's socio-cultural heritage is evident in many of the Doric street names along the main street, for example, *Sodgers Lane* and *Fermers Lane* (Coull, 2013).

Over time, despite political and social tensions, the language has maintained its profile in the arts (for example, Murray, 1979). Some of the earliest written Doric was poetry composed in the 1700s (Skinner and Bertie, 2005; McClure, 2017), and many songs and ballads have survived several decades or even centuries (Buchan and Moreira, 2011). The contemporary Arts fraternity has Doric speaking events, for example, an annual Doric Film Festival (Wyllie, 2019). Held in Aberdeenshire but open to all, the film festival was established in 2018 (ibid.). Film entries are invited from groups, individuals, and schools and each year, participation is widening (Cromar, 2023).

As witnessed in the wider community, Doric has been received very differently in schools over time. Widely discouraged or banned in many educational contexts until fairly recently (Jones, 1997; Russell and Flaws, n.d.), Doric has gained acceptance and, in places, is beginning to flourish once more (Scottish Government, n.d., 2022; Cromar, 2023). In contrast to its previous marginalisation in schools and Universities in Scotland, the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) currently has a Scots Language Award available at levels 3-6 (SQA, 2022); student teachers at the University of Aberdeen have Northeast Scots (Doric) on their timetable; and the Elphinstone Institute in Aberdeen has a world-leading wealth of research associated with the heritage and culture of the region including Doric (see for example, Nicolaisen and Moreira, 2013). I suggest the composition and presentation of this three-minute thesis in Doric at an Aberdeen PGR conference to be an excellent example of Doric's increasing profile within higher education.

New understandings from an old language

This article explores how Doric was not merely included or showcased as an alternative to English. Rather, its linguistic qualities, associations, and connections with lived bodymind experiences of two former teachers acted to enrich the understanding the thesis had sought to explore. Although it is perhaps refreshing to listen to a thesis recollected in a language other than English at an Aberdeen PGR conference, it could be imagined that the presenters were now granted greater power of linguistic expression to deduce and share an enhanced or nuanced understanding of their respective fields. Like the children's arguably enhanced opportunities to engage with learning at the beach, the PGR students presenting in their 'mother tongues' now had enhanced opportunities to learn more about their theses as they examined the precise meanings they had been trying to convey in written English. If my thesis

had surfaced learning ordinarily overlooked by teachers and learners existing within the hegemony of primary education in Northwest Europe, the three-minute thesis competition, in a multitude of languages, allowed presenters to present learning arguably silenced in their academic lives in the UK.

The brief history of Doric given in the previous section may explain the socio-cultural significance of its inclusion in the programme of the PGR conference. But the impact of its inclusion became of far greater significance for the *twa chiels* and, in turn, enriched the meanings surfaced by the thesis itself.

Jackie, Goethe, the Doric and I begin to engage as partners

Suppose Doric is accepted as deeply connected to the heritage of local landscapes, lives and communities (Nicolaisen and Moreira, 2013). In that case, the Doric expression of the children's learning with nature offers a profoundly situated account of experience. Jackie commented that it felt like we were reclaiming Doric as we condensed, composed, and communicated the one-hundred-thousand-word thesis into three minutes. The lens of reclamation is discussed in the literature and is understood to reach beyond a 'revitalisation' of a language (Leonard, 2019). Reclamation is described as a 'decolonial intervention' intent on challenging the social factors and power structures which disrupt ways of knowing and identity (ibid., e94). I began with an English version written alone by myself. Jackie, whose mother tongue is Doric, then prepared the first translation from my email to her. After this first exchange, Jackie and I read the Doric version together face to face or, more accurately, sitting side by side. The process was recursive, with decisions made and consensus sought between me, Jackie, and the Doric.

Working together, we took each sentence at a time. The unfamiliar (to me) words of Doric in each sentence prompted a question to Jackie about the meaning of the words. Just as Jackie was forced to delve into her understanding of the Doric, I was forced to reconsider the assumptions I had connected to the English words I thought I had so carefully chosen. Conscious that I only had three minutes to explain myself in Doric and that I could not speak it as fluently as English, every word became even more precious. I had to ensure I expressed precise meaning in every phrase. It was as if the language itself had become our teacher, leading us in our collaboration.

Noticing how we agreed on our choices of words and phrases, I was struck by the verisimilitude of our coming to a consensus with Goethe's writing on scientific knowing founded upon observation, perception, and phenomenological awareness (Holdrege, 2005; Seamon, 2013). As described by Nassar (2022), Goethe and Schiller claim that learning to see (or to be able to perceive) consists of three stages of observation. The first is a *totaleindruck* or general impression. The next step moves to detail where differentiation occurs. The third step is the aesthetic, which contains the general and particular in the same moment. This three-step process is demonstrated in the description of finding a Doric phrase for the thesis title later on in the article.

Reading the three-minute theses side-by-side

In the next section, the reader is offered two three-minute versions of the thesis research unfolding at the beach. On the right is the English version I completed alone, and on the left is a version completed

in collaboration with Jackie presented in Doric. The reader can begin with either column or switch between columns as they read. The reader might find themselves swinging pendulum-like between columns in a predictable pattern, perhaps paragraph by paragraph. Alternatively, they may hop left and right sporadically to check and double-check for meaning and understanding as individual words catch one's attention. A person's progress through the two versions and their subsequent understanding of it will almost inevitably be unique both in their body and their mind.

With one's eyes flickering about and one's mind trying to piece together familiar and less-than-familiar language, one's bodymind becomes engaged with the content of the text in perhaps more ways than usual. This can be likened to how the children had experienced nature as they combed the beach for treasures, apparently wandering one way and then the next. The embodied responses of the knower (the children/reader) with that to be known (nature/the text) are recreated in parallel and yet are less than linear.

The reader's active engagement with the two texts and the children's excitement at the beach might also be likened to the emotional and physical experiences of the *twa chieles* as they metaphorically threw ideas backwards and forwards during their translation efforts whilst gesturing with their hands. These dynamic processes arguably led to more nuanced understandings of the embodied experiences and posthuman concepts underpinning my thesis.

In addition to words, the three-minute thesis composition necessarily began with a single image on a slide (figure 1). I created and took a picture of my almost touching human-hand and a crab's claw. The significance of the gap between the two is described in each rendition of the three-minute thesis given later. On seeing the image and as the first conversations began, Jackie was reminded of a particular Charles Murray (1864-1941) poem: *Gin I was God*. In the poem, Murray describes God sitting up on high, viewing the apparent mess humans had made of a '*braw birlin 'Earth'*' (Murray, 1920, p.11) beneath him. My thesis, likewise, reflects upon the hierarchical and anthropocentric hegemony of teaching and learning at the expense of knowing and caring for nature. The *twa chieles* found resonance immediately.

<https://audio.com/cathy-f/audio/becoming-naturish-mix>

The link above to an audio recording is Cathy and Jackie's joint reading of two versions of a three-minute thesis. The audio file complements this article. At first, you may find listening to the two voices tricky, but please listen on. As the voices interweave, overlay, echo and leave gaps, perhaps try to tune in to one and then the other. The parallel voices match the parallel written versions available in their article *Twa Chieles, Rowed in a Naturish Bosie*.



Figure 1: *Becoming Naturish* three-minute thesis slide

Fit div ye see in iss pictur?

A haun, a partan's claa, some san?

What can you see in this picture?

A hand, a crab's claw, some sand?

Ayont ony consideration o similarity or differences atween thim, I wid raither winner foo or fit wye they'v come igether? Foo dae they relate tae een anither an fit's gaun tae happen tae e twa o them? Bit, I'd like ye tae pye attention tae e gap att exists atween e twa chiels. Iss gap's important, athou some micht assume e gap tae be teem, I think on't as bein fou o chunce, far onything cood happen. Ma thesis is about iss space far bairns an e natural world can come igither.

Er's plunt o research oot er concerned wi bairns in green spaces tellin us fou nature is gweed fur physical an mental health. Er's nae sae muckle about blae space an e wyes iss micht benefit baith fowk an nature.

Beyond any consideration of similarity or difference in size, colour or shape of the hand or claw, I would rather wonder how or why they have come together and what could happen next. I want to draw your attention to the gap between the two fellows. This gap is important; although some might assume the gap to be empty, this thesis examines this space as full of potential experience and correspondence between children and the natural world.

Plenty of research concerned with children in green spaces explains how nature is good for human physical and mental health. Some suggest that the interaction has benefits for the natural world! There needs to be more information about the influence of blue space and how any benefits are afforded.

Fin I wis a primary skweel teacher, ilka Tuesday mornin fur eleiven wiks ma class an masel waakt tae e beach. I didnae wint tae coont or missour, I winted tae observe an understan. Cos embodied experience is teen in throu e body eesin e senses, I seen realised thit wirds widnae be eneuch tae capture an share fit wis happenin in oor gaps.

E bairns an masel made art fae stuff we picked up aff e beach. We stravaiged, we played an we screived poetry. We wove wi seaweed an rock-pooled fur partins. We took photaes an films.

E bairns telt ma they wir becomin naturish an thit they wir plearnin an flearnin. Plearnin wis their new wurd fur playin and learnin, an flearnin wis fun an learnin. But ayont wirds, e bairns bodies an mine, wi nature, led e wye. E bairns an masel smellt, tasted, heard an saa oor wye intae e gaps atween us an nature bit, maist important o aa we felt oor wye intae iss blae space.

Let's hae a luik back at e slide, mebbe yer minded o Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel ceilin? In his maisterpiece e haun o God is reachin oot tae gie life tae Adam. A puckle fowk add thit God's jist-aboot-gaun-tae-happen touch micht be gaun tae gie maan smeddum...in ma pictur I hae eesed a partin's claa instead o God's haun. Iss shoood gaur fowk think aboot man sittin up er abeen ither life on oor planet an realise thit fin we haud nature, nature hauds us.

In my former life as a primary school teacher, every Tuesday morning for eleven weeks, my class and I walked to a local beach to be with nature. I did not want to count or measure; I tried to observe and understand. Because embodied experience is perceived and expressed through the body using the senses, I soon realised that more than words would be needed to capture and share what was happening.

We, therefore, made art from collected natural artefacts and litter. We beach-combed and wandered; we painted, played, and wrote poetry. We wove with seaweed and rock-pooled for crabs. From photos, videos, our works of art and field notes, I understood that we discovered the beach through our senses.

The children described their experiences as plearning and flearning, and they told me they were becoming naturish. Plearnin was their new word for playing and learning, and flearning was fun and learning. The children and I smelled, tasted, heard, and saw ourselves with nature. Most importantly, we felt our way to know ourselves and this blue space.

In Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel artwork, the hand of God reaches out to give life to Adam. Some add that God's imminent touch may also be about to confer man's intelligence...in my recreation of this image, I have substituted God's hand with the claw of an edible crab.

On oor visits tae e beach we fun oot thit touch is at e hert o biggin relationships wi the ither. On iss basis I think we shood gie bairns mair chunce tae flearn an plearn, tae come tae ken throu thir bodies, fae first- haun experience. Let's get oor young folk oot fae ahin desks an screens intae nature fur aa oor sakes. Rowed in a naturish bosie.

Our visits to the beach convinced me that nature touches us as we physically and emotionally touch nature. This thesis explores and imagines the learning made possible once the minds and bodies of school children are moved out from behind desks and screens to embrace nature.

The translation process – Goethe in action

As stated at the beginning of this article, creating the three-minute thesis in Doric followed a pattern. It began with a general understanding of the text, section by section. We then moved to a more granular appreciation of a sentence, i.e. individual words, and how they worked together to give meaning. Finally, we concluded our translation by shifting our attention to a more general or holistic impression of the section, incorporating an overall aesthetic appreciation of meaning. On more than one occasion, our aesthetic agreement was indicated by goosebumps up our arms, wide smiling faces and clapping of hands as we recognised and connected with each other's meaning. As Goethe advocated, we had moved from the general to the specific and then a holistic aesthetic observation of a phenomenon (in this case, our text), thereby increasing our appreciation or understanding.

Expressed like this, Goethe's attention to detail within a broader context links well with Heidegger's commentary on context. Heidegger states, "Entities only gain significance from their full context since a knife is not the same thing in a kitchen, a theatrical drama or the hand of a criminal" (1962, p.97). If one were to substitute Heidegger's knives for words, one might imagine the tension we faced as we transformed one hundred thousand English words into three minutes' worth of Doric. It felt as if each time a new Doric word was handled, it was handled with the same care and respect afforded to an extremely sharp knife. Whilst anxious to not be perceived as criminals, leaving the knives in the drawer untouched and therefore unappreciated would have been criminal.

I found the names of natural objects and creatures on the beach evocative, as I said them in Doric. I carefully repeated how Jackie said them...*steens* instead of stones and *partan* instead of crab. I had to pay attention to her words; they did not 'roll off my tongue.' I had to remember them; I had to work for them. Words for our bodies' movements and agency at the beach also struck me, *stravaiging* for beachcombing, I found deeply sensorial. The sound of this word somehow summed up how I physically and emotionally felt as I wandered across the beach with the children, guided by nature. I realised the term beachcombing would never be sufficient for me again.

How we became *rowed in a naturish bosie*

The children of this thesis created a key term, *becoming naturish*. It was so significant it became the title of the thesis. The children had invented the term to describe their understanding of their developing connection with nature. As previously explained, the children defined *becoming naturish* as "Liking the

outdoors and knowing what it means. When you know a lot about nature, and you're really used to it". Now, however, a Doric phrase was needed for the three-minute title. Jackie and I talked about the children's made-up words and phrases. With our arms waving wildly about and hands gesturing, we struggled to find a corresponding word for *naturish*. We laughed and smiled as we spoke and shifted our attempts to find appropriate Doric expressions of the children's sensation of *becoming naturish*. I sensed our movements and laughter mirrored the children's reactions I had witnessed at the beach. We discussed the children's growing relationship with the beach and their increasing familiarity with the more-than-human-others they met there, based on respect and trust. Our language was contingent and situational. Our exclamations became a reclamation of language, connected through our bodyminds, from our nuanced understanding of the young learners' experiences on the beach. We decided that the children's love and belonging to the local beach reflected a familial (i.e., family-like) bond.

Jackie and I recollected that a hug is usually exchanged when a young child and an older, much-loved relative commonly greet each other in Northeast Scottish culture. In Doric, the word for hug or cuddle is *bosie*. We investigated our feelings as we uttered the word *bosie*. Jackie modelled the word, and I copied her. We felt that the long vowel sound in the middle of the word suggested an inwardness, or enveloping, and it exactly mirrored our personal experiences of the embodied experience of being cuddled by a much-loved family member. We agreed the O shape our mouths had to make to produce the sound matched the O shape our arms made as we reached out, preparing to give and receive a *bosie*. We found the synonymous movements and sounds reassuring, persistent, and gentle. Furthermore, we always exchanged a hug when we met. We liked it. When put together, *naturish* and *bosie*, we felt the two words gave a powerful expression of the children's experiences. *Bosie*, now precisely understood to express a warm, enveloping hug afforded by nature to a junior, more minor, younger, or weaker (and certainly respectful) component part of the family, seemed congruent with the relationality of what was happening.

Turning back to the English title, we decided we needed a Doric expression for becoming. This was tricky as it was neither an adjective nor a noun, and once more, we felt we could not merely substitute a word for a word. We returned to the embodied experience of being hugged or giving and receiving a *bosie* in more detail. As we examined the nature of the *bosie*, Jackie suggested *rowed*. *Rowed* is a Doric word meaning surrounded by or wrapped in. The linkage between wrapping, encircling, or environing of the body and the connection with the etymological derivation of the word 'environment' was too exciting for me to ignore. We instantly agreed on the final phrase of the thesis precis in Doric to be '*Rowed in a naturish bosie*'. The continuity of the original and overall intention of the thesis to explore and explain children's growing understanding of themselves in relation to nature, i.e. their environment, by using a word derived originally from a meaning associated with containment was perfect. This final consideration of the general context of the words concluded our discussions. The thesis' title had also become its concluding phrase. We had navigated Goethe's three steps towards coming to know a phenomenon, in this case, my thesis.

Concluding thoughts

This article, which documented and examined the ‘translation’ of one hundred English words of a thesis into three minutes of Doric expression, revealed a nuanced learning experience between the bodymind lived experiences of *twa chiels* and language itself. Expressed first in English and then co-translated into Doric, the *twa chiels* were led by the opportunities and possibilities of alternative expression of experience. In critiquing the assumption that quality, and therefore valuable, learning can only take place in classrooms, the PhD student had to view children’s experiences when learning outdoors in nature from a different perspective, a bodymind perspective. The experienced Doric speaker had to describe in detail the meanings of words and phrases and, alternatively, notice her bodymind responses as she spoke. If the thesis successfully connected the bodymind experiences of children with their coming to know nature and themselves with nature, the article re-interpreted these lived experiences once more. This time, the place connected socio-cultural aspects of linguistic expression gave rise to new expressions and meanings. The English one hundred thousand words and the three-minute Doric precis together reveal the intricate intra-action of bodily awareness with speech and language experienced by communities of learners, teachers, and nature. The experiences and understandings discussed in this article shift from place to place, between bodies and minds, and between words and languages to give a rich insight into the learning often overlooked or missed in the hegemony of Western education.

The shifting of understanding of the *twa chiels* was also Goethian in nature. Beginning with an initial somewhat generalised comprehension of children visiting a beach to play and learn, Jackie and I dived deeply into our pooled bodymind experiences of teaching and learning and language to emerge with a shared, holistic, more precise knowing of children’s embodied connection with nature at the beach. We had a collection of words encapsulating our embodied aesthetic responses to children learning, playing, nature and beaches.

Finally, as Jackie and I shapeshifted between teacher and learner, we alternated between the speaker and listener, teacher and learner. We reacted together yet independently, each of our reactions and responses informing the next. We refocused our efforts to understand each other by periodically revisiting our own bodymind reactions with what we were trying to express. Unbeknownst to us, though, while Jackie and I resided in the inner and outer anthropocentric world of mind, body, and speech, busy ‘reclaiming’ the Doric language. It had been quietly *chavin awa* and arguably leading the wye all along!

References

- BUCHAN, D. and MOREIRA, J., eds., (2011). *The Glenbuchat Ballads*. Mississippi: University Press of Mississippi.
- BURNARD, P. and COLUCCI-GRAY, L., (2020). *Why Science and Art Creativities Matter; (Re-) Configuring STEAM for Future-Making Education*. Leiden and Boston: Brill Sense.
- COULL, G., (2013). End of the road for streets and lanes with no names. *The Herald*, 9th March.
- CROMAR, C., (2023). 'Dinna Pit Aff': Doric language and culture celebrated by young and old in Aberdeen today. *The Press and Journal*, Friday 16th June.
- EDUCATION SCOTLAND, (2014). *Conversations about learning for sustainability Case studies of Scottish schools and early years*. Edinburgh: Education Scotland. Available: <https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Documents/RES1-conversations-about-lfs.pdf>
- EDUCATION SCOTLAND, (2021). *Whole school and community approach to learning for sustainability (Lfs) Self-evaluation and improvement framework Transforming lives through learning*. Edinburgh: Education Scotland. Available: <https://education.gov.scot/media/usdd0j0b/frwk11-lfs-framework.pdf>
- FRANCIS, C., (2023). *Becoming Naturish - Exploring children's embodied connections with nature*. Doctoral thesis. University of Aberdeen.
- GRUENEWALD, D.A., (2003). The Best of Both Worlds: A Critical Pedagogy of Place. *Educational Researcher*, 32(4), pp.3-12.
- HARAWAY, D., (2016). *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.
- HEIDEGGER, M., (1962). *Being and Time*. (J. Macquarrie and E. Robinson, trans.) New York: Harper and Row. (Original work published 1953).
- HOLDREGE, C., (2005). Doing Goethean Science. *Janus Head*, 8(1), pp.27-52.
- JONES, C., ed., (1997). *The Edinburgh History of the Scots Language*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- KUBY C.R., SPECTOR, K., and JOHNSON THIEL, J., (2019). *Posthumanism and Literacy Education, Knowing/Becoming/Doing Literacies*. New York: Routledge.
- LEARNING and TEACHING SCOTLAND, (2010). *Curriculum for Excellence through outdoor learning*. Glasgow: Learning and Teaching Scotland. Available: <https://education.gov.scot/Documents/cfe-through-outdoor-learning.pdf>

LESLIE, D., (2021). What's in a name? The prevalence of the 'Doric' label in the north-east of Scotland. *Scottish Language*, 40, pp.49-83.

LEONARD, W.Y., (2019). Indigenous Languages through a Reclamation Lens. *Anthropology News*, 60(5), pp.92-98. <https://doi.org/10.1111/AN.1266>

LJOSLAND, R., (2021). Scots and Nynorsk: A Comparison of Two Language Movements' Struggle for Recognition in Higher Education Language. In: M-M. APELGREN, A-M. ERIKSSON and S. JAMSVI, eds., *Matters in Higher Education Contexts: Policy and Practice* (Vol. 22). Brill. pp.151–169.

MCCLURE, J.D., (2013). The Beginnings of Doric Poetry. In: J. CRUICKSHANK and R.M. MILLAR, eds., *After the Storm: Papers from the Forum for Research on the Languages of Scotland and Ulster triennial meeting, Aberdeen 2012*. Aberdeen: Forum for Research on the Languages of Scotland and Ireland, pp.166-186.

MERLEAU-PONTY, M., (1962). *Phenomenology of Perception*. London: Routledge.

MILLAR, R., (2022). Doric: the Scots dialect spoken by the Queen: what it sounds like and where it comes from. *The Conversation*. Available: <https://theconversation.com/doric-the-scots-dialect-spoken-by-the-queen-what-it-sounds-like-and-where-it-comes-from-190385>

MURRAY, C., (1920). *In the Country Places*. London: Constable and Company Limited

MURRAY, C., (1979). *Hamewith: the complete poems of Charles Murray*. Aberdeen: Published for the Charles Murray Memorial Trust by Aberdeen University Press.

NASSAR, D., (2022). Knowing well: Goethe, Bildung, and the ethics of scientific knowledge. *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*, 30(4), pp.646–665.

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF SCOTLAND, (undated). *The King James Library, St Andraes*. Available: <https://wee-windaes.nls.uk/letters-an-state-papers-o-james-vi/>

NICOLAISEN, W.F.H., and MOREIRA, J., eds., (2013). *The Ballad and the Folklorist: David Buchan's Collected Papers*. Memorial University of Newfoundland, Folklore and Language Publications.

PINK, S., (2015). *Doing Sensory Ethnography*. London: Sage

RATHUNDE, K., (2008). Nature and Embodied Education. *Journal of Developmental Processes*, 4(1), pp.70-80.

RINALDI, C., (2005). *In Dialogue with Reggio Emilia: Listening, researching and learning*. London and New York: Routledge.

RUSSELL, M., and FLAWS, M., (n.d.). *Spikk proper, noo! Teaching dialect in Primary School*. Available: <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/elphinstone/kisti/display/651/>

SCOTS LANGUAGE CENTRE, (2014). *Keith Wins Scots Lanugage Award*. Available: https://www.scotslanguage.com/Keith_Scots_Toun/Keith_wins_Scots_language_award

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT, (n.d.). *Consultation on The Scottish Government Commitments to Gaelic and Scots and a Scottish Languages Bill*.

SEAMON, D., (2013). Encountering the Whole: Remembering Henri Bortoft (1938–2012). *Phenomenology and Practice*, 7(2), pp.100–107.

SKINNER, J. and BERTIE, D.M., (2005) *John Skinner : collected poems*. Peterhead: Buchan Field Club.

SOMERVILLE, M. and WILLIAMS, C., (2015). Sustainability education in early childhood: An updated review of research in the field. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood*, 16(2), pp.102-117.

WYLLIE, J., (2019). *First ever Doric film festival to shine a light on north-east language*. Available: <https://www.pressandjournal.co.uk/fp/news/aberdeen-aberdeenshire/1645578/first-ever-doric-film-festival-to-shine-a-light-on-north-east-language/>